

May Is Skin Cancer Awareness Month

To help reduce rising rates of skin cancer from overexposure to the ultraviolet rays of the sun, May has been deemed Skin Cancer Awareness Month and the National Council on Skin Cancer Prevention has designated the Friday before Memorial Day, May 22, 2009, as "Don't Fry Day". This day was created to encourage sun safety awareness and to remind everyone to protect their skin while enjoying the outdoors. The action step the National Council on Skin Cancer Prevention is emphasizing for 2009 is "Slap on a Hat," encouraging everyone to wear protective clothing like a wide-brimmed hat to provide important protection from too much sun.

As warm weather approaches and millions of Americans prepare to enjoy the great outdoors, the risk for ultraviolet (UV) damage of the skin increases. Skin cancer is on the rise in the United States, and the American Cancer Society estimates that one American dies every hour from skin cancer. It is estimated that this year 62,480 cases of malignant melanoma, the most serious form of skin cancer, will be diagnosed in the U.S. In 2006 there was 93 new cases of melanoma reported in Wyoming and 19 melanoma related deaths.

Fortunately, skin cancer is highly curable if detected in its early stages. An easy way to remember sun safety awareness is to Slip! Slop! Slap!...and Wrap — slip on a shirt, slop on sunscreen of SPF 15 or higher, slap on a hat, and wrap on sunglasses. The best way to detect skin cancer early is to examine your skin regularly and recognize changes in moles and skin growths.

Most skin cancers are caused by overexposure to UV radiation. A tanned appearance has become a sign of a good look and good health, fueling the increasing trends of sunbathing and tanning beds among young adults and women. However, using a sunless self-tanning product and continuing to apply sunscreen can help greatly reduce skin cancer risk. Individuals with lighter-toned skin are more susceptible to UV damage, although people of all races and ethnicities can be at risk for skin cancer. Those who have a family history of skin cancer, plenty of moles or freckles, or a history of severe sunburns early in life are at a higher risk of skin cancer as well. To minimize the harmful effects of excessive and unprotected sun exposure, protection from intense UV radiation should be a life-long practice for everyone.



- Avoid being outside from 10:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m.
- Wear clothing that covers your body, and a hat to protect your face, ears, and neck.
- Use sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of 15 or higher.
- Wear sunglasses that have UV absorbing lenses.
- Avoid sun lamps, tanning beds, and other sources of UV light.

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Important Dates

08/25	CCRC Training
08/26	WCCCC Meeting



The Other Side of Cancer: it's not just about medicine, it's about you!

By Andi Berry, MHR, ATR-BC, LPC, NCC

Cancer affects us all. There is hardly a person alive today that does not have a story to tell of how cancer has affected their life. "It was my mother . . . my father . . . my best friend . . . my co-worker . . . my child . . ." or maybe the story is about you. Nonetheless coping with cancer brings up a multitude of issues that are often hard and awkward to address. The champion and founder of this area of study, Jimmie Holland, MD, calls this the "Human Side of Cancer" (Holland 2000) it is also known as the psychosocial oncology.

As an oncology counselor I have been privileged to work with many amazing people, some diagnosed with cancer, some who are caregivers, and some who are family and friends. We talk together about coping with the confusion and chaos of cancer, in a safe non judgmental place. Over the next months I will write about coping with the personal side of cancer for the WCCCC newsletter. I also hope to acquaint and re-acquaint you with a wide variety of national and regional resources.

Hearing your doctor say, "We need to talk, and I am afraid that it is cancer," is scary and shocking. A dear friend said, "After that conversation I knew I had joined a club I never wanted to join!" And, "Once I joined ... I realized it was a life-time membership." Another friend, cancer survivor and articulate poet wrote, "I am the elephant in the room and my tusks are showing." (Chastain, 2006) Many people experience a feeling of shock and often say things like, "Life as I knew it ended and the game changed." For some the sense of shock is accompanied by a huge sense of confusion and surrealism. Statements like, "How can I be sick? I am in the best shape of my life, I just ran a marathon, I have a two year old, there is no way I can have breast cancer ... I don't have time for this!", depict the state of shock and non-reality.

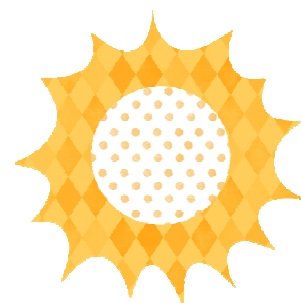
Many issues that come under the heading of the personal side of cancer; these include but are not limited to: coping with fatigue, finding a way to be hopeful but not to live in denial, coping with ambiguity, living with depression, wondering why and how this happened, questioning if you have cancer or had cancer, wondering what is a cancer survivor, wondering how to parent with cancer, finding ways to parent a child with cancer, dealing with a changed body image, facing sexual and reproductive health issues, reassessment of values and beliefs, changing friendships and other relationships, wondering about genetics, dealing with finances, struggling with the frustration of insurance companies, having to revisit past issues of personal trauma and grief, coping with medical phobias, and addressing end of life planning and care. These matters may be ones you have wondered about or wanted to speak about with your doctors.

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In subsequent columns I want to open these topics for discussion so that they do not become a quagmire of pain and confusion. Coping with the confusion of cancer is easier when you have a safety net of excellent medical care, psychosocial care, and spiritual care. How you, your family and caregivers address these issues may impact how much of a toll or a blessing cancer brings to your world. Yes, I did say blessing. Cancer is a blessing because it makes us cherish life, face our mortality, and live deliberately.



Cancer interrupts our plans and changes lives. It starts a process that both challenges and informs our values, beliefs and actions. One guarantee is that no one is the same after they have met cancer and felt its medical and psychosocial effects.

Andi Berry, MHR, ATR-BC, LPC, NCC is an oncology counselor, licensed professional counselor and board certified art therapist. She is a member of APOS, the American Psychosocial Oncology Society. She lives and works in Laramie Wyoming.

We are all very excited about the Wyoming Weekend of Hope coming May 29-30 in Powell and would encourage your attendance

2nd Annual Wyoming Weekend of Hope (Powell, Wyoming)

The Wyoming Weekend of Hope is an opportunity for education, enlightenment, and recreation for cancer patients and survivors with any type of cancer . . . and their families. The focus is to encourage, educate, and celebrate the lives of those living with the cancer. This exceptional weekend will address the complex challenges and needs of people with cancer at any stage in their disease. Cancer presents families with many challenges - physical, emotional, spiritual, and financial. Join us for rejuvenation and life altering networking! Some of the area's finest doctors and professionals have been recruited to speak at this year's conference. Participants will find topics to match a wide variety of personal interests on the agenda. In addition to the educational program

there will also be seminars provided for lifestyle enhancement and personal living. Plan to spend an extra day and explore Yellowstone National Park and Bighorn National Recreation Area. Information will be available at the registration booth.

REGISTER TODAY!

May 29 and 30, 2009

Please visit www.wyominghope.org for more information.



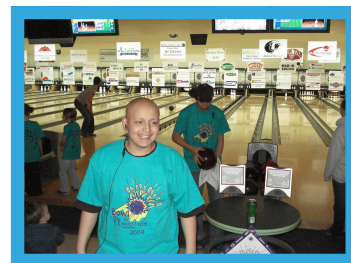
Bowl for Jason's Friends, Another Unbelievable Year!

By: Marisue Marsh

For eleven years, Jason's Friends Foundation has been raising funds to assist in meeting non-medical expenses for families in Wyoming who have a child diagnosed with a brain tumor, spinal cord tumor or any childhood cancer. This ranges from covering the necessary out of state travel costs for appointments/treatments at pediatric cancer facilities to making house payments if a parent needs to stop being a wage earner in order to be with their child full-time. Over the years we have been able to help more than 150 families with needs surpassing 1.2 million dollars. Each spring the Bowl for Jason's Friends fundraiser is held at El Mark-O Lanes to sustain this worthwhile cause. For a more thorough explanation of our mission, please visit our website: www.jasonsfriends.com.

2009's event took place in an economic climate which has everyone allocating dollars in an understandably more conservative manner. Despite this reality, teams of bowlers pounded pavements and burned up phone lines raising money to aid fellow Wyoming residents faced with this serious medical, emotional and, oftentimes, financial crisis. Loyal sponsors from all corners of the state continued their patronage with both dollars and donations of goods and services. Countless volunteers contributed their time and talent. It was a statewide endeavor involving thousands of people. In the end, after final accounting, the sum raised at this year's Bowl for Jason's Friends totaled nearly \$200,000.00. This is an accomplishment reached only through the efforts of many!

Just saying 'thank you' to all the individuals and groups who played a part in this success seems woefully inadequate. It only begins to communicate our gratitude for your generous support. Nonetheless, we want to once again convey this heartfelt message to all from the children and families of Jason's Friends Foundation: THANK YOU, thank you, Wyoming!



WCCCC Website Updates

Please feel free to visit the WCCCC Website at: www.fightcancerwy.com as it has gone through a few changes. There are updated pictures, a Wyoming Pain Initiative Tab and updated reports. The Workgroup section of the website is under construction and we will have that up and running Summer 2009. Also please feel free to register for the upcoming Consortium Meeting on the website on the "Up-coming Events" page. If you have any questions or suggestions about the website please contact Jessica Perez at 307-777-7362 or via e-mail at: jessica.perez@health.wyo.gov



Drafting the 2011-2015 Wyoming Cancer Control Plan

In 2006, the Wyoming Comprehensive Cancer Control Consortium released the 2006-2010 Wyoming Cancer Control Plan. Since that time, the WCCCC has done an extraordinary amount of work to implement the cancer plan. In the few short years Wyoming has been working on improving cancer prevention and control in the state, much has been achieved. However, our work is far from complete. Cancer continues to affect all of us, personally and professionally.

The time is fast approaching to determine what we will need to do in the future of cancer control in the state. The WCCCC needs you and your organization to be a part of the next phase by working to set our agenda for the future.

During 2009, the WCCCC and its leadership will be revising the first edition of the cancer control plan. We will evaluate successes, observe challenges, and modify our goals, objectives and strategies to continue to improve the lives of Wyoming people impacted by cancer. Please join us in this effort. If you are unable to participate personally, please identify someone in your organization who can. Your help is critical to the success of this process.

We need your help in writing the 2011-2015 Wyoming Cancer Control Plan. We will be focusing on the creation of the new plan this summer. Please join us in Saratoga Wyoming on August 26, 2009, to start this process. For more information and to register for the WCCCC Summer Meeting (registration is free!) please visit www.fightcancerwy.com click on the upcoming events tab.

